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FM AMEMBASSY MANAMA  
TO RUEHGB/AMEMBASSY BAGHDAD IMMEDIATE 0256  
INFO RUEHZM/GULF COOPERATION COUNCIL COLLECTIVE PRIORITY  
RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 8014  
RHBVAKS/COMUSNAVCENT PRIORITY  
RHMFISS/HQ USCENCOM MACDILL AFB FL PRIORITY

S E C R E T SECTION 01 OF 03 MANAMA 000496

SIPDIS

BAGHDAD FOR GENERAL PETRAEUS AND AMBASSADOR ERELI

E.O. 12958: DECL: 07/25/2028

TAGS: [PREL](#) [PGOV](#) [IR](#) [IZ](#) [BA](#)

SUBJECT: SCENESETTER FOR GENERAL PETRAEUS' VISIT TO BAHRAINClassified By: Charge d'Affaires a.i. Christopher Henzel for reasons 1. 4 (b) and (c)

[1](#)1. (S) General Petraeus, Embassy Manama and the Bahraini leadership look forward to welcoming you back to Bahrain. Following on Secretary Rice

[1](#)2. (S) You will find the leadership focused first on defending against potential Iranian missile threats, but also on the return of Navy deper

[1](#)3. (S) On the political side, the Bahraini leadership is following very closely media speculation about potential scenarios for military confr

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Missile Defense and Regional Cooperation  
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[1](#)4. (S) Bahrain's national security strategy rests squarely on the presence here of NAVCENT/Fifth Fleet headquarters and Bahrain's close securi

[1](#)5. (S) The top security priority for Bahrain's leadership is missile defense. King Hamad told Secretary Gates on March 26 that Bahrain has ass

[1](#)6. (S) DoD has launched a number of initiatives to develop multilateral air and maritime defense capabilities. In February, NAVCENT hosted a M

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Coastal Defense and Maritime Security  
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[1](#)7. (S) The Government of Bahrain is concerned about its vulnerability to maritime threats such as drug trafficking, terrorism and subversion.

[1](#)8. (S) For this reason, and in view of the low FMF levels of recent years, the Embassy strongly supports a NAVCENT-initiated Section 1206 fund

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receive funding through the Section 1206 program this year, but will be submitted again in 2009. If approved, this proposal would significantly

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Royal Bahrain Navy  
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[1](#)9. (S) From 4 March through 5 June, the Commander of the Royal Bahrain Navy (RBN), Brigadier Al Mansoori, took command of Combined Task Force

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U.S. Navy Dependents  
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[1](#)10. (S) The dependents of the NAVCENT personnel in Bahrain were sent home in summer 2004 in reaction to what DoD viewed as an inadequate GOB r

[1](#)11. (S) The Crown Prince is a strong advocate for the people-to-people contacts fostered by having Navy families in Bahrain. He views this as

[1](#)12. (S) President Bush and Secretary Gates told the King during their March meetings in Washington that Navy dependents would begin returning

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Nuclear Cooperation  
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[1](#)13. (C) On March 26, the U.S. and Bahrain signed a Memorandum of Understanding on Nuclear Energy Cooperation, as well as a statement of suppor

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Internal Issues  
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[1](#)14. (C) Over the past two months the King has departed from his traditional detached style and intervened personally in several controversies

[1](#)15. (S) Within the Sunni minority there are several pockets of extremism, which the Bahraini authorities appear to be monitoring closely. In J

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Conclusion  
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[1](#)16. (S) As the smallest Gulf state, Bahrain has historically needed closer security ties with a western patron than any of its neighbors. As a  
\* HENZEL